

B | C O D E

**2021**

**BLACK  
DIGITAL  
FACT PACK**



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**OUR MISSION IS TO PROVIDE THE RESEARCH ON THE BLACK AUDIENCE THAT BRANDS NEED TO PIVOT ON A MOMENT’S NOTICE OR CRAFT LONG TERM CAMPAIGNS WITH SENSITIVITY AND RELEVANCE.**

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Letter from the  
General Manager

2020 was a year of lessons and reshaping one’s understanding of everything from how we live to how we relate to one another. As an organization that spends each day focused on exploring, empowering and understanding the multicultural landscape, there is no question that the previous year reaffirmed our commitment, opened our eyes wider and pushed us further forward. Data is the bedrock of our offering because the evolving lives and attitudes of the audience is the only known constant.

In 2021 and beyond, audiences are changing rapidly and we understand

that brands need to respond and adapt in real time. A large part of our mission is to provide the research on the Black audience that brands need to pivot on a moment’s notice or craft long term campaigns with sensitivity and relevance. The B Code Intelligence Center (BCIC) provides a constant pulse on the everchanging Black consumer’s habits, opinions and sentiments.

With a population of 44M+ and constantly growing buying power, the Black audience represents an important revenue opportunity. The insights, advanced studies and key metrics provided by the B Code Intelligence Center

are an essential resource for all businesses looking to drive their revenue amidst shifting needs. We are excited to share B Code’s first Black Digital Fact Pack which establishes a new baseline for the behavior and attitudes of the Black audience online. As brands are building their monthly, quarterly and yearly plans, this study reinforces the insight that this audience demands a custom, authentic and engaging approach to winning their dollars.

**Damian Benders**  
GENERAL MANAGER,  
B Code



# METHODOLOGY

The 2021 Black Digital Fact Pack was produced by B Code and uses data collected from the B Code Intelligence Center’s 2021 Black Digital Consumption Survey, administered from Jan 27 to Feb 6, 2021. The study surveyed 1,334 Black respondents and is representative of all main geographical areas of the United States. All data in this report is from the latest Black Digital Consumption Survey unless otherwise stated.





# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The past year was an inflection point worldwide and multicultural marketing was significantly impacted. Our experiences taught us there were meaningful overlaps between specific multicultural audiences, and now more than ever, there is a resounding call to examine the nuances, behaviors, thoughts, and digital habits of the Black community in order to authentically serve one of the nation’s most powerful and influential consumer markets.

The last year was difficult, particularly for Black and Hispanic communities, who were disproportionately affected by the Coronavirus pandemic. In order to provide insight into this impact and today’s Black audience, B Code delved deep studying the responses of over 1,300 Black consumers to produce the 2021 Black Digital Fact Pack.

Our learnings demonstrate one well-known truth that culture is incredibly important to the Black community, who are also incredibly engaged online and looking to connect with brands who understand their impact, share their values, and support their community. Despite everything the last 12 months have presented, the opportunity to build meaningful connections with diverse Black audiences is there for marketers that leverage insight and digital channels with purpose.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

### Platforms & Devices

- **The smartphone (83%)** is the most selected device when Black respondents are asked which devices they use to connect to the internet, followed by **laptops (65%)** and **tablets (45%)**.
- **3 in 4** Black consumers own a Smart TV in their households.

### Entertainment

- **70%** agree that the internet is their primary source of entertainment.
- **4 in 5** agree that they like to play video games because it allows them to spend time with friends.

### Social Media

- **1 in 2** Black Americans say they are most likely to see digital ads on social media platforms.

- **83%** say they don’t mind if a social media influencer promotes a brand as long as it seems authentic and sincere.

### Brand Advertising & Culture

- **77%** do not think brands understand Black American culture.
- **93%** say it is important for brands to be socially responsible.
- **85%** say culture is incredibly important to who they are.
- **83%** think lexicon and vernacular are a huge part of Black identity.
- **83%** of Black consumers are more likely to shop from a brand that shares their values.



# THE BLACK COMMUNITY IN THE U.S.

**W**ith a population size of 48MM, the Black and African-American population in the United States stays connected and is innovative, brand loyal, and so much more. The influence this community has had and continues to have on our nation is undeniable. Marketers who look beyond demographics and attempt to understand the diversity and nuances that exist within this audience are certain to be more effective in engaging with this powerful consumer group.



IN PERSPECTIVE



The Black/ African-American community accounts for **13%** of all U.S. population meaning: 1 in 7 people in the United States of America is Black

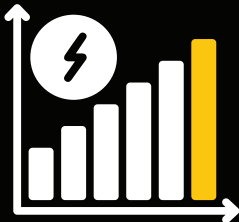
The Black immigrant population has increased **FIVEFOLD** since 1980



**88%** -The percentage of African Americans age **25** and older with a high school diploma or higher in 2019

SPENDING POWER

In 2019, Black buying power was **\$1.4T** according to the Selig Center for Economic Growth



Black Americans drive the U.S. economy: if they were their own country, they would easily rank in the top **15** economies in the world

The Black GDP is projected to grow to **\$1.8T** by 2024



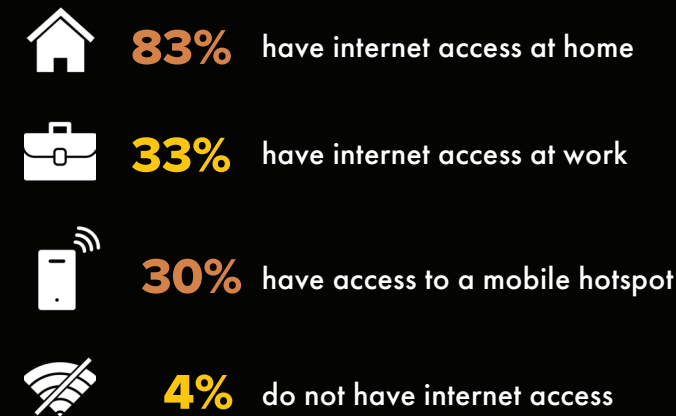
# INTERNET USAGE

Internet usage among the Black community is significant. Most Black users access the internet at home through various devices, with smartphones being the top device of choice, almost double that of laptop computers. When it comes to usage, 3 in 4 say they use the internet every day in order to search for information, listen to music, research products, shop, stay connected with friends and family, and so much more.

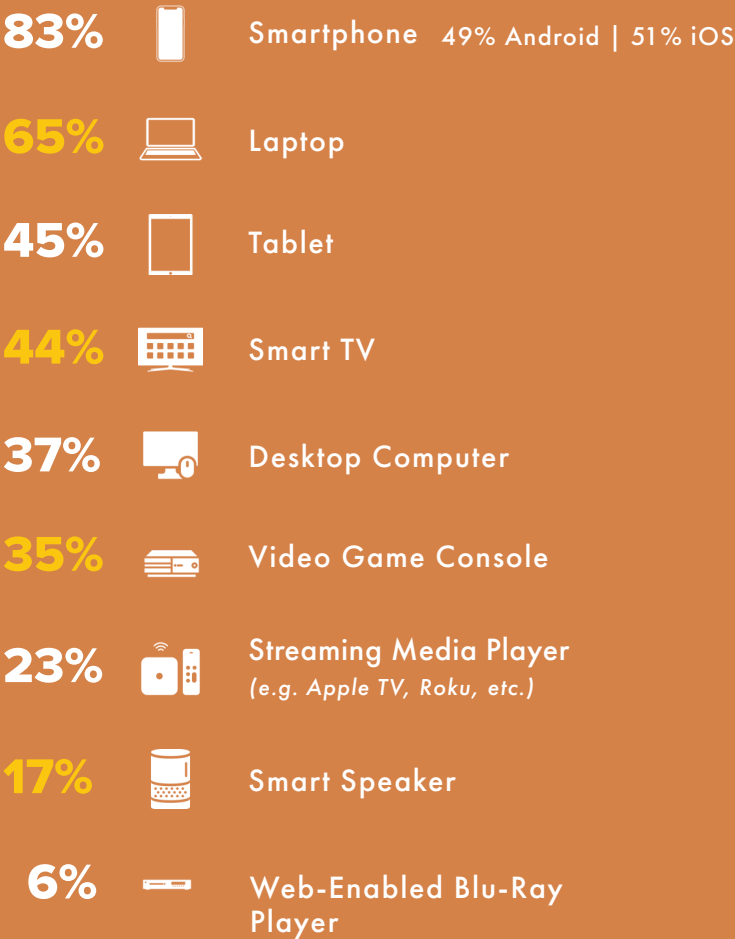


INTERNET  
USAGE

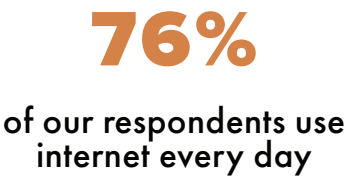
WHERE DO  
BLACK AMERICANS  
HAVE ACCESS TO  
THE INTERNET?



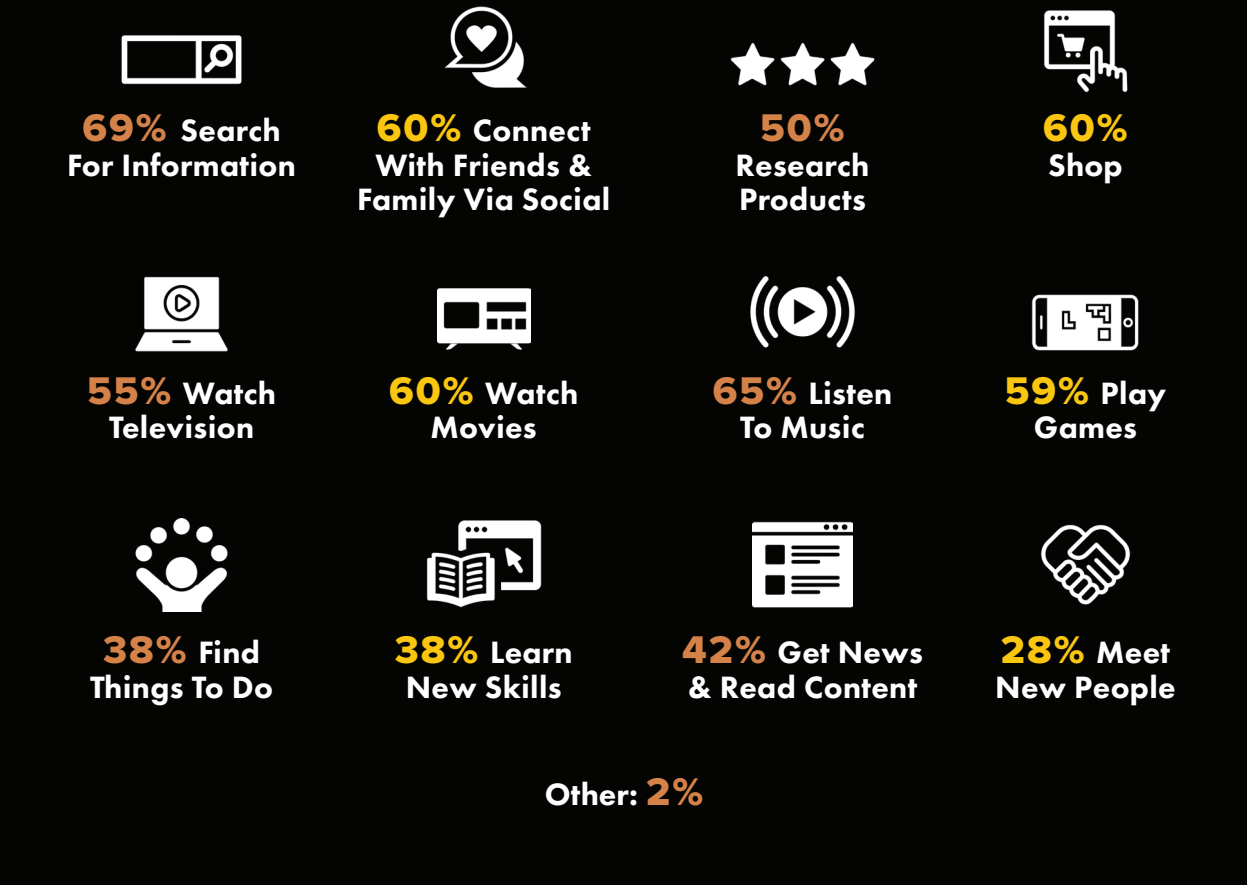
WHICH DEVICES  
DO THEY USE TO  
CONNECT TO THE  
INTERNET?



HOW OFTEN DO BLACKS  
USE THE INTERNET?



MOST POPULAR ONLINE ACTIVITIES





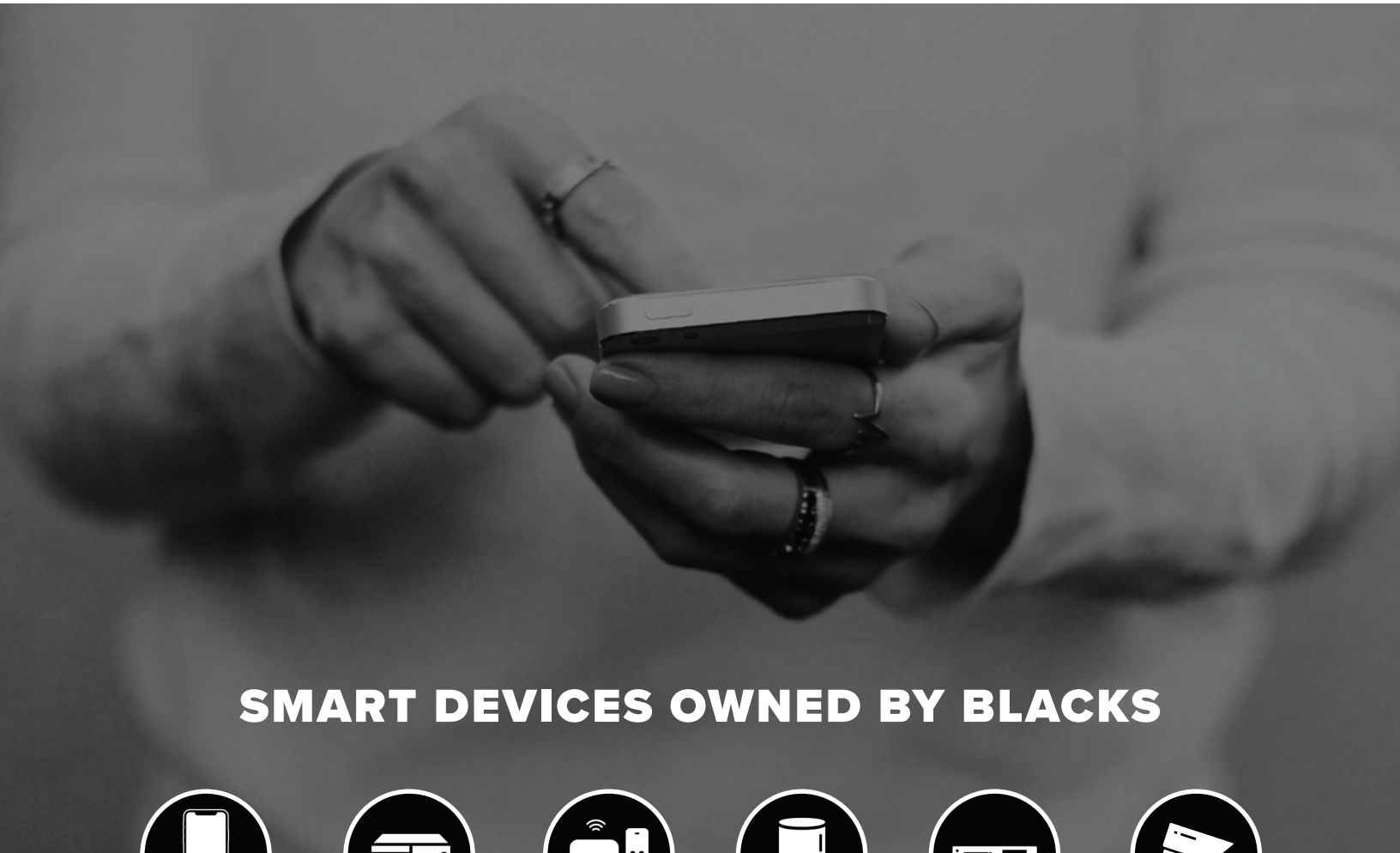


# PLATFORMS & DEVICES

The Black community is incredibly diverse, including audience segments with their own nuances, interests, and passion points. For this powerful audience, smartphones are the top device, with a significant 93% of our respondents owning a smartphone. These tech-forward individuals not only have a variety of smart devices in their households, but the majority at 80% also stream video and audio content online. In fact, 1 in every 2 Black respondents is a cord cutter and does not have a cable subscription at home. Black consumers also like to learn about the latest technology (67%) and are likely to share their knowledge with friends and family.



PLATFORMS & DEVICES



SMART DEVICES OWNED BY BLACKS



93%

Have A Smartphone



64%

Have A Gaming Console



46%

Have A Streaming Media Player



36%

Have A Bluetooth Speaker or Have A Connected Speaker



32%

Have A Web-Enabled Blu-Ray Player



22%

Have A Security Camera

BLACK PEOPLE & GAMING

50% identify as a gamer



I ALSO USE MY GAMING CONSOLE TO:

56%

Play video games

30%

Browse the Internet

33%

Stream music

33%

Stream movie

21%

Stream television

20%

Play DVD movies

17%

Shop and make purchases

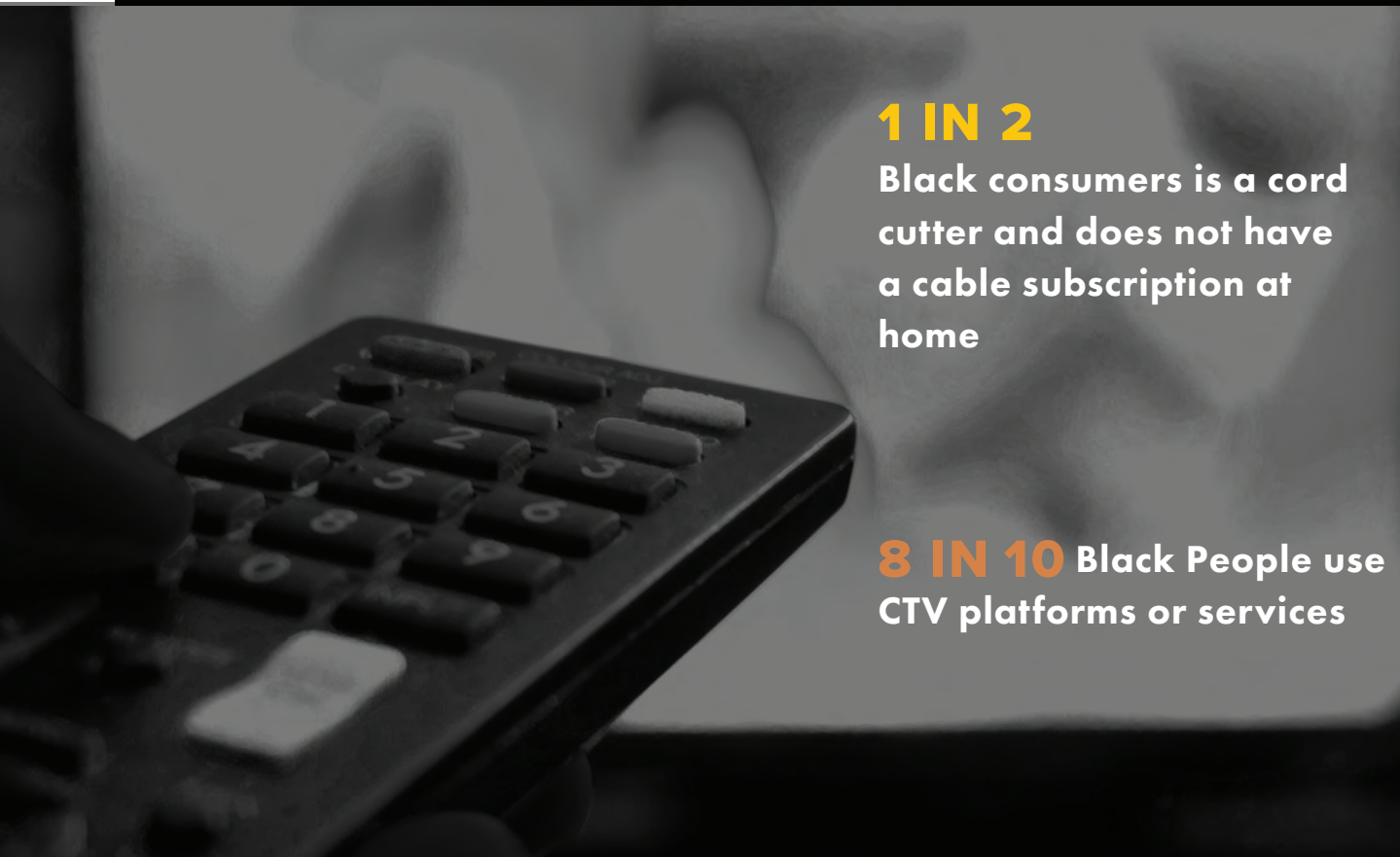
10%

Listen to the CDs

27%

None of these

CONNECTED TV



**1 IN 2** Black consumers is a cord cutter and does not have a cable subscription at home

**8 IN 10** Black People use CTV platforms or services

The most popular streaming services among Blacks are Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, and Hulu / Hulu Live TV



DIGITAL AUDIO

**81%** listen to audio content or music online

When listening to digital audio platforms, **81%** listen to music, 7% to news, 6% listen to podcasts, and 5% to sports

The most popular digital audio platforms among Blacks are Spotify, Apple Music, and YouTube Music





SOCIAL MEDIA

Which social platforms or services do you use?

YouTube	77%
Instagram	68%
Facebook	67%
TikTok	43%
Snapchat	42%
Twitter	38%
Pinterest	28%
WhatsApp	17%
Discord	16%
Linkedin	15%
Reddit	12%
Skype	10%
Taringa	1%
Other	2%

1 IN 2 use social media for a minimum of 6+ hours every week



54% say social is where they are most likely to notice a digital ad

54% say they usually learn of new brands and products on social media



83% don't mind if an influencer promotes a brand as long as it seems authentic and sincere





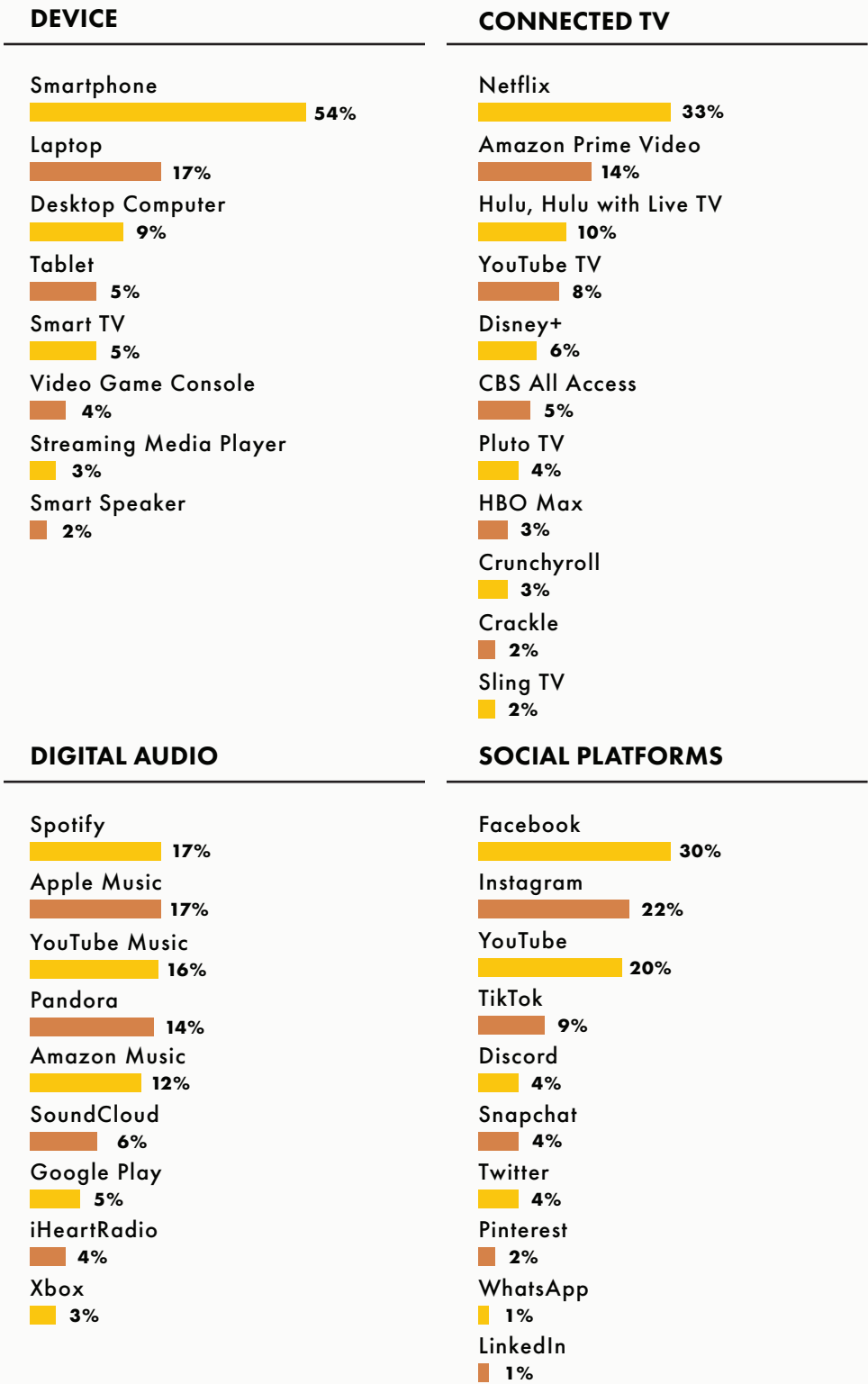
# ENTERTAINMENT & TIME SPENT

The internet is a primary source of entertainment for Black audiences, a fact that has been especially true during the last 12 months. The Black community is filled with enthusiastic users of smartphones, with 1 in 2 saying their smartphone is the device they use most. Black users also significantly leverage popular digital channels and platforms, such as Connected TV, Digital Audio, Social Media, and more — staying connected and sharing the content, games, and products they watch, play, and use with friends and family.



DEVICES & CHANNELS USED MOST BY BLACK CONSUMERS

MOST POPULAR



TIME SPENT

A TYPICAL WEEK FOR BLACK CONSUMERS

AVERAGE TIME SPENT EVERY WEEK...

	1-2 Hours	3-5 Hours	6-9 Hours	10-15 Hours	16-19 Hours	20+ Hours	N/A
Using The Internet On A Smartphone	14%	16%	18%	15%	8%	19%	9%
Using The Internet On A Tablet	16%	17%	14%	10%	5%	8%	31%
Using The Internet On A Video Game Console	14%	14%	15%	11%	6%	6%	35%
Listening To Music Online	21%	20%	18%	12%	8%	11%	10%
Watching Videos Online	19%	19%	15%	15%	9%	11%	12%
Streaming Television And/Or Movies Online	16%	18%	17%	13%	10%	11%	14%
Watching Cable TV	14%	15%	14%	11%	8%	7%	28%
Playing Video Games	16%	15%	17%	12%	8%	7%	26%
Reading E-books	14%	14%	11%	9%	4%	4%	44%
Messaging Apps	25%	18%	16%	12%	7%	6%	17%
E-mailing	32%	17%	12%	9%	6%	5%	18%
On Social Media	19%	19%	19%	12%	10%	11%	10%
Speaking over the Phone	29%	20%	16%	12%	5%	7%	11%
Texting	26%	21%	14%	13%	7%	10%	9%
Video Chatting	25%	17%	13%	7%	5%	5%	28%



# THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE TIME OF BLACK CONSUMERS



**53%** of Black audiences are spending more time connected.

## How has COVID changed your digital consumption habits?

- I am now spending more time connected **53%**
- I am now spending less time connected **23%**
- I am spending the same amount of time connected as before **24%**

## HOW MANY HOURS ARE YOU SPENDING...

	1 Hour More	2 Hours More	3 Hours More	4 Hours More	5 Hours More	Same	Spend Less Time
Streaming TV/ movies than before the pandemic?	10%	16%	19%	15%	18%	18%	5%
Playing video games than before the pandemic?	9%	15%	14%	12%	14%	23%	13%
Streaming online audio than before the pandemic?	11%	14%	16%	13%	15%	24%	7%



# BEHAVIORS & OPINIONS

Certain and beyond question, the Black community and Black culture have incredibly influenced American culture and the nation. As with other multicultural communities, culture is incredibly important for this powerful audience and influences their opinions and their behavior, both offline and online. Authentic and successful multicultural marketing requires an understanding of Black consumers and the nuances that exist within the larger community and across Black segments, especially since a whopping 82% of Black respondents say that once they find a brand they like, they stay loyal to that brand. This means that if brands and advertisers take the time to inform their marketing and resonate with Black audiences online, they can create lasting and meaningful connections with some of the most powerful consumers in America.

# INTERNET

The internet is a powerful tool I use to stay connected with friends and family (77%).

The internet is my primary source of entertainment (70%).

I spend less time listening to the radio or watching TV at home because of the internet (53%).

The internet has changed the way I get information about products and services (75%).

# DIGITAL ADS

An ad that shows my culture is more likely to connect with me (64%).

An ad that shows different cultures is more likely to connect with me (55%).

There should be more ads specifically made to resonate with the Black community (77%).

I am likely to click on a digital ad (75%).





# BRANDS

It's about time that brands recognize the power of the Black community (82%).

I do not think brands target Black audiences enough or understand Black culture (70%).

If a brand makes an effort to include elements of my culture, I am more likely to think favorable of them or purchase their products. (82%)

Once I find a brand I like, I stay loyal to that brand (83%).

# CULTURE & IDENTITY

Culture is incredibly important to who I am (85%).

My culture is Black and American (70%).

As I have grown older, my cultural identity has been influenced by other cultures or subcultures (81%).

I am more likely to watch TV programs, movies, or videos that showcase my culture (82%).





**BRANDS,  
COMMUNITY  
& VALUES**

**82%**  
of our respondents are  
more likely to shop from a  
brand that shares their values



**77%** are more likely to purchase from a brand that supports their community or causes you care about.

**65%** use social media to share messages helping the community (sharing stories, raising awareness)



**57%** are more likely to switch brands to a more expensive one if they share your views on helping the community and the environment

**67%** say it is important for brands to be socially responsible.





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